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FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION OF OBSERVERS IN TAJIKISTAN

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/50/749/Add.1) which contains the proposed budget for the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for the 12-month period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997. During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. UNMOT was established by the Security Council in its resolution 968 (1994) of 16 December 1994 for an initial period of six months. Its mandate has since been extended in subsequent Security Council resolutions, the latest being resolution 1030 (1995) of 14 December 1995, by which the Council extended the mandate of the Observer Mission for six months until 15 June 1996.

3. As indicated in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Secretary-General's report, total resources made available to the Observer Mission, from its inception until 30 June 1996, amount to $13,365,937 gross. Estimated expenditures total $12,987,337 gross; and in accordance with the terms of General Assembly decision 50/450 of 22 December 1995, an unencumbered balance of $378,600 gross for the period ending 16 June 1995 will be credited to Member States. In addition, as at 9 February 1996, amounts totalling $12,610,406 have been assessed on Member States from the inception of the Observer Mission to 15 June 1996; contributions received total $8,256,421, hence a shortfall of $4,353,985. In this regard, the Advisory Committee reiterates the need for Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time.

4. Voluntary contributions received include $717,463 in cash from the Government of Germany and $70,753 in medical supplies from the Government of Switzerland. The Trust Fund established pursuant to Security Council resolution

968 (1994) to support the implementation of the Cease-fire Agreement and, in particular, the activities of the Joint Commission has secured, to date, contributions totalling $82,224, consisting of $54,224 in cash from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and $28,000 from the United States of America in the form of a letter of credit. Upon inquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, in relation to the contribution of the United Kingdom, there is a balance of $30,200 as at 31 March 1996.

5. The General Assembly, in its resolution 49/240 of 31 March 1995, appropriated $10,044,200 gross ($9,547,000 net) for the continued operation of the Observer Mission for the period from 27 April 1995 to 30 June 1996. The cost estimates submitted by the Secretary-General in his report (A/50/749/Add.1) amount to $7,302,500 gross ($6,795,200 net) for the period from 1 July 1996 to 30 June 1997. This estimate reflects a decrease of $1,306,300 gross, when compared to the previous 12-month period, the reason being lower costs for air operations and military personnel, as well as the exclusion of the provision for the Support Account for Peace-keeping Operations during the budget period.

6. However, the Advisory Committee was informed that, based on the 8.5 per cent of the civilian staff component of UNMOT, the amount that would have been included in the budget estimates for the funding of the Support Account would have amounted to $290,600.

7. Of the total cost estimates contained in the Secretary-General's report 49 per cent is based on standard costs and ratios, while the remaining 51 per cent covers mission-specific requirements; non-recurrent costs amount to $75,300, while recurrent costs amount to $7,227,200 gross.

8. Item 1 of the budget, military personnel costs, at a cost of $1,555,200, provides for a full component of 44 military observers, as agreed by the Security Council in its presidential statement of 6 November 1995 (S/PRST/1995/54) regarding an increase in the strength of the Observer Mission. However, savings have been achieved in relation to travel costs, which decreased from two rotations to one rotation; and in regard to rations, which, as explained in paragraph 1 of annex II.D to the Secretary-General's report decreased from the provision for 60 days to a provision for 30 days, since the existing stockpile is sufficient to cover the requirements for 1996.

9. A provision for $3,418,500 is included for civilian personnel costs in relation to 24 international staff and 35 local-level posts. This provision takes into account the 15 additional posts associated with the strengthening of UNMOT, for which the concurrence of the Advisory Committee was sought in February 1996. The proposal to establish these 15 additional posts was considered by the Advisory Committee and agreed to in its letter AC/1282 of 15 February 1996, which is contained in the annex to the present report. Upon inquiry, the Committee was informed that as at 31 March 1996 there were four vacant Professional posts, four vacant local staff posts and one vacant Field Service post. However, the Committee was informed that the Secretariat expects these posts to be filled by July 1996.

10. Item 5, transport operations, indicates a requirement for $329,700. The increase in comparison to the previous period reflects the corresponding

increase in the number of vehicles from 25 to 38. Furthermore, as indicated in annex II.D, paragraph 4, of the report, the increase in the cost of spare parts, repairs and maintenance is attributable to frequent vehicle breakdowns resulting from the mountainous terrain, rough road conditions, dispersed locations of outstations and inadequate availability of spare parts and mechanical skills. Therefore, the standard rate of $500 per month per vehicle used in relation to vehicles older than one year was applied here. The Advisory Committee noted, as well, that primary or "first dollar" coverage in relation to vehicle insurance is now available in Tajikistan. This type of third-party liability insurance is provided to the United Nations for missions or field offices where no other local insurance is available. It has reduced the third-party liability insurance from an annual premium of $400 per vehicle in 1994 to a premium rate of $150 per vehicle in the proposed budget.

11. The Advisory Committee inquired in regard to the provision of $735,000 for air operations. The amount of $675,000 in relation to helicopter operations provides for the use of one helicopter at a monthly cost of $56,250 (12 hours per month), a decreased figure when compared to the previous period, which is attributable to lower operational requirements. An amount of $60,000 covers the cost for fixed-wing aircraft services, at a monthly cost of $5,000 for the chartering of monthly supply flights between Islamabad and Dushanbe.

12. The Advisory Committee noted that no data for current inventory were included under item 9, Other equipment. However, this information has been submitted after the hearings and the Committee has been assured that the item will be duly reflected in the future.

13. The Secretary-General in paragraph 28 of his report outlines the action to be taken by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session in connection with the financing of UNMOT. The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposal that the General Assembly appropriate the amount of $7,302,500 gross ($6,795,200 net) for the 12-month period beginning 1 July 1996, to be assessed at the monthly rate of $608,542 gross ($566,267 net), subject to the extension of the mandate of UNMOT by the Security Council. The unencumbered balance of $378,600 gross for the period ending 16 June 1995 should be credited to Member States in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly decision 50/450 of 22 December 1995.

Annex

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AC/1282

Advisory Committee on
Administrative and Budgetary Questions

15 February 1996

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the Controller's letter of 9 February 1996 seeking the Committee's concurrence for the establishment of 15 additional posts, relating to the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT). These posts include one D-1 for the Chief Military Observer, 3 posts for civil affairs officers (1 P-5, 2 P-4), 1 P-3 for field security officer, 1 field service officer and 9 local staff (7 interpreters/translators and 2 finance assistants) for UNMOT.

The Advisory Committee recalled that in your report to the Security Council on the situation in Tajikistan (S/1995/799) you indicated that as a result of the establishment of the posts in Vanj and Taloqan, it would be your intention to seek budgetary authority for a small increase in UNMOT staff of five military observers and three civil affairs officers. In his statement of 6 November 1995 (S/PRST/1995/54) the President of the Security Council agreed with your proposals.

The Advisory Committee was informed that developments in the mission area have necessitated an increase in substantive staff. The Advisory Committee recalled that during its consideration of document A/50/749 it noted that the vacancy factor for UNMOT for the period from inception to 16 June 1995 was 17 per cent for international staff and 4 per cent for local staff. However, the Committee was informed that under the current establishment there are no vacancies. In this connection, the Committee noted that the Chief Military Observer for UNMOT will be responsible for the overall command of the military observers assigned to the Mission and would serve as deputy to Head of the Mission.

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With regard to three posts of civil affairs officers, the Advisory Committee noted that while the functions of the civil affairs officer at the P-5 level would include providing political advice to the Head of Mission, managing and coordinating the work of the civil affairs branch and assisting the Head of Mission in the preparation of periodic reports to headquarters, the functions of the two civil affairs officers at the P-4 level would include monitoring, investigating and reporting developments related to the cease-fire agreement. The Committee was also informed that the civil affairs officers would be available for assignment to outstations.

The Advisory Committee noted that with regard to the need for a post of field security officer, the duties of the field security officer are currently performed by military observers; however, they serve with UNMOT on a rotational basis and are not familiar with United Nations standard security operating procedures.

The Advisory Committee was informed that a post of field service officer was required due to serious vehicle maintenance problems encountered by UNMOT caused mainly by difficult geography of the country as well as a widely dispersed vehicle fleet at UNMOT headquarters and seven outstations.

With regard to requirement for the two finance assistants, the Advisory Committee was informed that currently there is one post for finance assistant who has been performing the functions of Cashier as well as approving and certifying officer; this was contrary to the financial regulations and practice relating to the separation of functions.

In connection with the seven additional local posts for interpreters/translators, the Advisory Committee noted that the interpreters and translators on board have been required to work continuously with both the military observers and international civilian staff of the mission.

The Committee also noted that the additional costs related to increase in staff estimated at $445,125 gross ($388,825 net) for the period from 1 March to 30 June 1996 can be absorbed within the available appropriation. The Committee was informed that this would be possible mainly as a result of a reduction in MSA rates.

Under the circumstances, the Advisory Committee concurs in your proposal to establish the 15 additional posts.

Yours sincerely,

C.S.M. Mselle
Chairman